of the State Government, the Hon'ble Allabahad High Court vide its Order dated 10th January, 2003 has modified its earlier Order dated 13th November, 2002 to the extent that it will remain open to the U.R State Sugar Corporation Ltd., as well as U.R Cooperative Sugar Rederation to enter into negotiations with the respective cane growers' unions and make payment according to the price agreement arrived at with regard to the price of sugarcane.

Foodgrains in Central Godowns

† 2368. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of wheat or other foodgrains available in the Central foodgrains godowns;

(b) whether any limit has been fixed for providing wheat per person in the drought affected States by the Central Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) The stock of rice and wheat in Central Pool, as on 1.1.2003 was 482.00 lakh tonnes.

(b) and (c) Under Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) foodgrains are allowed to each family @35 kgs per month all over the country.

Rotting of foodgrains in godowns

†2369. SHRI RK. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any incidents of rotting wheat in Government godowns in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra including several other States has come to Government's notices;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to maintain coordination in the Public Distribution System;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for rotting foodgrains in Government godowns on the one hand while starvation deaths are taking place in a number of States; and

(d) whether Government propose to prepare an emergency plan in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) No, Sir. No incident of rotting of wheat in Government godowns of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra or any other State has been reported. Foodgrains are stored in FCI godowns in scientific manner and preserved by technically trained and qualified quality control staff. Regular and periodic inspections of stocks are carried out by the officers of the FCI and timely prophylactic and curative treatment is carried out for the control of insect pests.

However, due to vagaries of weather and natural calamities like unprecedented/incessant rains, cyclones, floods, spillage, multiple handling in storage, transportation by rail/roads etc. some damage does occur to foodgrains. The quantity of such damage occurred to foodgrains as on 31 st Jan. 2003 is 0.262 lakh MTs which works out to be 0.12% of the total stocks holding of 203.50 lakh MTs.

(b) The Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) system is regularly monitored by the senior officers of the Ministry in close coordination with the officers of the State Governments. Shortcomings, if any, noticed by the inspecting officer are brought to the notice of the State Governments for taking the remedial measures.

(c) and (d) A Task Force has been set up in the Ministry to monitor the supply and distribution of foodgrains under the Targetted Public Distribution System. State Governments have been advised to streamline a fully functional Public Distribution System in the vulnerale areas and to provide uninterrupted supply and distribution of foodgrains to the same. It has also been stressed that employment generation programmes ought to be implemented vigorously and the State Governments have been requested to ensure requisite measures to combat the draught situation.